

Remarks

This Amendment is in response to the office action dated August 16, 2005 and is due on or before November 16, 2005.

Claims 29 and 30 were rejected as obvious over Ebner et al (Ebner) in view of and German Document DE 272980. Claim 36 was rejected as obvious over Ebner and DE 272980 in view of another German Document 3244204.


Claims 29 and 30 are subject to a double patenting rejection over the commonly owned US Patent 6419178. Further, Claims 29, 30 and 36 are also subject to double patenting rejection over the commonly owned US Patent 6722601 in view of Ebner. Upon allowance of a claim applicant will file a terminal disclaimer.

Reconsideration of Claim 29 is respectfully requested. The use of a plastics frame become practical after the realization that the exceedingly high crash forces produced during a crash should not be communicated to the plastic frame. These crash forces are typically communicated to the typically steel frame (such as shown in Ebner) via the retractor locking mechanism. The use of a torsion bar limits the maximum amount of force that can be resisted by the retractor before the seat belt webbing is allowed to protract as the seat belt is pulled by the forward motion of the occupant during a crash. In the present invention the force limit of the torsion bar (force limiting means) is set lower than the force level for which the reinforced resin frame can withstand which prevents the frame from shattering during the accident. This combination is not taught by the prior art.

Further, the Office Action related, "Since the FMVSS 209 is a Federal safety standard related to seatbelts and the devices of Ebner et al and DE '280 are deemed to inherently meet the standard." This assumption is not necessarily correct as the standard relates to seatbelt in actual production as opposed to inventive possibilities as disclosed in the prior art.

In view of the aforementioned, it is respectfully urged that the present application be reconsidered, the claims allowed, and the case passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,


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